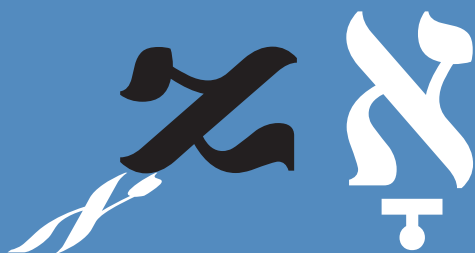


Abraham Schneider
An Anthology of Practical
& Clever Phrases



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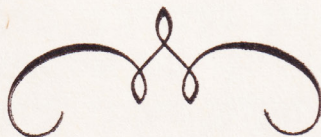
פראַקטישע און קלוגע זאצען



צונויפגעזאמעלט און אָנגעשריבען

— פון —

אברהם שניידער



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Abraham Schneider

*An Anthology of Practical
& Clever Phrases*

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Foreword

THIS ANTHOLOGY is made up of various clever and practical phrases drawn from various cultures—the majority from my own cultural tradition, and a great many of them from my own experience and practice in life.

As a child I enjoyed listening to the adults speaking and always wanted to know everything. As it turned out, I understood very little of what I heard. But as I grew older things began to come back to me and in the end they inspired me to write something.

Not being a writer by profession—I am as they say merely, *a yid fun a gants yor*, an everyday Jew—it took me several years to compile and write the present volume. I don't know how it is for real writers, but for me there were times when I had absolutely no desire to write, times when I felt I had forgotten everything; and there were other times when I was suddenly spurred by inspiration, and found no shortage of material. I mostly wrote during the night.

Perhaps this book is not written in the most literary style. Here the reader will have to forgive me for—as I said above—I am not a professional writer. But this anthology is the fruit of my labor. I gathered the materials and arranged them myself, without consulting anyone. Responsibility for any errors is entirely my own.

This anthology contains over a thousand phrases, and I have also included a short satirical sketch about a Jewish association.

X



Everything comes to an end, except that which is human.

A miser and a fat cow first become useful after death.

When one has fat daughters there is plenty of laughter.

A pauper's gut can never be fed.

A *shlimazl* falls on the grass and breaks his nose.

When there's no fish, herring is also a meal.

No one wants a Jew, particularly a poor one.

America is a great sea that draws all rivers toward itself.

All's well that ends well.

When foolishness succeeds it is still foolishness.

A woman stands you on your feet, and a woman
knocks you off your feet

In the old, one sees the new; in the new one sees the
old.

A person withers when time passes.

A flower withers when summer passes.

When everyone is boss the floors remain unswept.

If two people say you're drunk, you should have a lie
down.

One must be bold if one wants others to bend to one's
will.

At peace is one who possesses understanding.

A fool fills his mouth with laughter, a wise man with
clever words.

A tree bends before the wind.

The poor man bends before the rich man.

A false person also observes with a crooked face.

The fool gives, the wise man takes.

If you don't overpay you won't buy.

If one does not prepare on the eve of the Sabbath,
one has nothing for the Sabbath.

A source that never runs dry is the spring of wisdom.

At peace is the man who has understanding.
No one commits a crime unless he first has a foolish
idea.

A fool is halfway to being a prophet.

A fool will always repeat the same foolishness.

A fool is an endless source of worry.

Every day is a bad day for a pauper.

A person comes into the world with closed fists as if to
say: "All of this belongs to me."

A person leaves the world with open hands as if to
say: "Look, I didn't take anything."

A dead body does not feel the knife going in.
A tall man, a short man—all are the same height in
the grave.

A woman prefers a poor young man to a rich old man.

He who lends becomes a slave to those who borrow.

A decent man lacks the audacity to deny a debt to his creditor's face.

A man should teach his son how to do one easy and one clean type of work.

If you look out for other people's property, your own will be safe.

If he is a poor man, you should not sleep with his pawned objects in your house.

A righteous man is one who does not take another man's bread.

If you vouch for one who does not pay, you must pay in his stead.

If your enemy is thirsty, give him a drink; if your enemy is hungry, give him food.

Too much talk pains the head.

A good lie is often more effective than a good fact.

Sometimes silence speaks louder than words.

When a man begins to fight with himself it is a sign he is worth something.

If someone tells you that a person has died, you should believe them.

A used up item is good for nothing.

It's a good thing for mankind that people get married in their youths when their wisdom is lacking and their desire is strong.

A worrier speaks a great deal.

Don't run away from what's good, and don't run after what's bad.

Even in the brightest house there is a dark corner.

When you have a lot, think of little.

When you have little, don't think of much.

A storm can topple the mightiest tree.

If you don't climb up the mountain you'll never see the valley.

An empty vessel can never give rise to an abundance.¹

A custom is more powerful than a rule.

When we are babies our cradles are too large; when we are adults our world is too small.

If someone comes to do you a favor, it is better not to accept.

Sometimes a thousand words are needed to explain a single word that should not have been spoken.

If you wish to follow your soul's desire you must live apart from other people.

A lie is like a snowball—the longer you roll it out the bigger it gets.

A worm that lives inside a horseradish believes that nothing could be sweeter.

It's the little things that give a person away because he does not take the care to hide them.

¹ This proverb refers to a fork-superstition whereby it is good to keep a small amount of something (coins, grain etc) and to leave it uncounted. The logic goes that you may be blessed and the small amount will grow, but this cannot happen if you count the coins or measure the grain.

All things that exist are egoistic, and they will always seek to exploit those that are smaller than they are.

A sage will sometimes tell a joke; a fool will never grow tired.

A healthy pauper is happier than an unhealthy prince.

A woman who is never flirtatious is always boring.

A woman does herself up not just to please a man, but to torment other women.

An old pot is better than a new shard.

No one is always foolish, but sometimes everyone is.

No one can live forever, no one will let you live decently, and why one lives at all, no one knows.

You can't clap without a hand.

A woman seldom conquers a man with her tongue, but always with her lips.

A beggar cannot seek honor.

If you cannot have the best, make the best of what you've got.

One who leads a herd of oxen must be very careful as his charges have sharp horns.

I'm right because I'm not you; you're wrong because you're not me.

If a Cohen sacrifices you, you are an ox.

If one wishes to find the good in a work, one must delve into it.

A fool always blames others.

A reasonable man blames himself.

A wise man blames no one.

Always chose a leader with brains; you need someone to preside, and not someone to backslide.

If the whip does not work a cane will not help either.

A wolf may lose its hair, but never its nature.

A blind man has a problem with his eyes, a mute has a problem with his tongue; a fool has problems from head to toe.

The whole world depends on peace.

A person is like a nation; he must always appear to be independent.

Everyone brags about the truth, but no one possesses it.

What does in through one's teeth reaches down to one's bones.

If you wear yourself down you become a rag.

A blind man does not play cards.

A handworker will find his bread anywhere.

A lazy man will go hungry.

A pinch in the cheek and the color will stay.

Becoming wealthy is not as good as being beautiful and not as beautiful as being good.

A hunch is fine on someone else's back.

Do not hurry to respond to something until you've found the right words.

If a person does not seek out knowledge, then knowledge will certainly not seek out the person.

Poor clothes for poor people, rich clothes for rich people.

A hole makes a thief.

Silence is good even for clever people; for fools it is essential.

When a liar is not believed when he finally tells the truth.

True words will make themselves known.

A lie has no feet.

When one finds a decent woman one finds happiness.

Man proposes, God disposes.

When life is sweet the world is abandoned.

If a fool throws a stone into a garden even ten wise men cannot remove it again.

Even when foolishness succeeds, it is still foolishness.

If one lives with calculations, one dies with confessions.

Just as the world cannot operate without wind, the world cannot operate without Jews.

Everything lies in God's hands—except piety.

A penitent stands higher in God's eyes than the most righteous man.

A person should not ask what happens up above, or what happens down below: one must not philosophize.

A mother never forgets her son.

Grandchildren are equal to one's own children.

A son holds his mother in higher esteem than his father.

A son is more afraid of his father than of his mother.

One should push away a child and a woman with the left hand, and approach them with the right hand.

Even among his good friends the poor man is hated.

You should only share a secret with one in a thousand.

One should never enter one's friend's house suddenly.

A person is a friend to himself.

One should never place all of one's belief in a friend:
one should respect him and suspect him.

You can't get anywhere without greasing a few palms.

Even if he has sinned, a Jew remains a Jew.

A person can survive on bread alone.

As soon as a person is elected into a communal position he becomes rich.

A time comes for every man.

The best time for a father to nourish his children is
when they are still young.

When one deals in needles one earns needles.

A man is stronger than iron and weaker than a fly.

If you go to bed ill, you wake up with a fever.

If you observe other people's problems, your own
problems become lighter.

You can't give someone the finger if you don't have any fingers.

A Jew beats his chest in repentance and goes right back to sinning.

All people serve the same God, but call Him by different names.

A woman appeals to us when she appeals to temptation.

A man appeals to us when he appeals to our moral sense.

A hungry person has no need for your moralization.

If you ask me to seek the truth, it's probably because you have lost it.

A kiss is superficial.

A bite is from the heart.

An alliance against war will cause a war against alliance.

A woman does not like to be dominated by a man,
yet she will respect such a man more than a man who
allows himself to be dominated by her.

Respect is an aspect of understanding.

Envy is a raging fire.
Some serve God with a shovel, while others cannot
spare Him a spoonful.

A piece of wood cannot burn by itself.

Poor is the man who has nothing to boast of except
for his own patience.

Poor is the woman who has nothing to boast of except
for her own beauty.

Poverty is no shame, but it's no honor either.

A poor man is not one who has too little, but one who
wants too much.

A lover sings, a wife groans.

Even a mule can lose his patience and refuse to carry
a burden.

Everyone knows what love is, but no one understands what it is.

Honest toil makes life sweeter.

When one weeps while sowing, one sings while reaping.

If we are together we stand tall; if we separate we fall down.

If you file suit against someone you must have either a silver tongue or a golden purse.

A clever businessman is like a great doctor.

A good name is sometimes more precious than gold.

Everything is good with bread.

A Goy laughs in the face of death and is always in good health.

A Jew cowers in the face of life and is always sick.

So goes the game of life: the truth is not believed, but a polished lie is.

You can fool many people, but only for a short time.

An empty vessel makes the most noise.

A bad worker hurts himself with his own tools.

An old bachelor grows more foolish the older he gets.

An old spinster grows more capricious the older she gets.

If you can, do.

If you know, hold your tongue.

If you have, keep.

Everything thinks the other person is laughing, even when he's in a tight spot.

All people are misers except when it comes to wise-cracks.

If you forget something in another person's house, be sure to remind them.

Just as it is possible to find a needle in a wagon of hay, it is possible to find the truth in the world.

You can buy love, or animosity.

One generation comes, another generation goes, but the world is eternal.

Foolishness is the worst affliction.

When a worker speaks he speaks only about his work.

A doctor who treats without charging has no value.

Don't like in a city where there are no doctors.

Women are drawn to jewellery.

A woman may earn respect among men, but never among other women.

A woman is easily moved to tears.

When the doctor is far, your eyes go blind.

A white head of hair makes for a beautiful crown.

In a yeshiva, it is the old who shine.

In a war, it is the young who shine.

One shout at a clever man is more effective than slapping a fool a thousand times.

A Gentile makes the Exile last longer.

If you cannot and don't know how, don't try.
When Purim comes around we forget all our troubles.

Drunk all year, and sober for Purim.

Old love never rusts.

Every time two women fight there is a man somewhere in the middle.

A chained animal which is let free will run faster than an animal which is always free.

All's fair In love and war: in both cases it is not reason that plays the main role, but instinct.

On the thief's head the hat burns.

When you burn yourself on what's hot, you'll blow on what's cold.

The stable doors are locked once the horse has been stolen.

If you can't go over, you must go under.

A fool believes everything.

A clever man investigates everything first.

A braggart is good for beating.

Everyone enjoys a good morsel.

When you laugh, no one sees; when you cry, everybody sees.

When the sheep are being sheared, the lambs tremble.

When in Rome do as the Romans do.

You can't walk around the honey without giving it a lick.

When the ox is a penny, a penny is also an ox.

A sick man is asked, a healthy man is given.

A blow heals.

A word does not heal.

In one matter a wife agrees with her husband: that she is his better half.

To make it through life is not live crossing a field.

In every person there is a little doctor, a little poet,
and a little madman.

If you are rich, you do not need others.

If you are poor, the others don't need you.

A good friend is like fine silk: the less you use it, the
longer it lasts.

A fool is one who believes that life is a dream.

A pitiful face can sometimes arouse sympathy, but
never respect.

One should never regret not going somewhere.

One drinks water for nothing.

When the father is around the mother can be loyal.

It does one no good to spread oneself too thin.

If one does not ignite one never burns down.

If the pauper is unwanted, throw away his bundle.

There is no answer for a stupid question.

A pretty wife is the most beautiful decoration a house can have.

A good wife treats her husband kindly.

A man should leave his mother and father behind and go to his wife.

If a man sells his daughter he will never have anything good.

All's well that ends well.

Just as one cannot live without light, one cannot live without hope.

A wicked tongue is worse than a bad hand.

One cannot show a cane to a beaten dog.

If God wills it, even a broom can shoot.

Don't ask a decent person to explain himself.

A lot is enough, a little is enough, the main thing is to live happily.

Whether through suffering or through joy, one must know what to say.

If you pull too hard on the string it will snap.

When you grab something you give up your free hands.

In a big river one catches big fish.

If the head is a fool the whole body is in trouble.

If you don't prepare on Friday, you'll have nothing for Shabbos.

Jews like to be praised and hate to be criticized.

When a clever man asks you a question you must know what to answer; when a fool asks a question it makes no difference how you respond.

If you do not scrimp during the week, you will have nothing on Shabbos.

In spring the heavens are closer, and a woman will appear more divine.

A woman is not like a violin; after playing you cannot hang her up on the wall.

One swallow does not make a summer.

One piece of wood cannot burn on its own.

One old friend is better than two new ones.

Before you say a word it is yours; after you say a word it belongs to someone else.

Some people cry that they have so few pearls.

Some people cry that their soup is too weak.

Some talk about what they know and some know what they are talking about.

Often we seek happiness abroad and lose the happiness we had at home.

Lost money is only half lost; lost courage is gone forever.

One can perhaps learn to be a business manager, but one can never succeed if one has no talent of one's own.

Do not go where you have not been invited.

ב

Until the solace comes, the soul can wait.

For a Christian woman her husband takes precedence over her; for a Jewish woman, she takes precedence over her husband.

Better a bitter leaf from God than a sweet leaf from a human being.

Do not lament life, for life itself is lamentable enough.

Better slowly with your own people than quickly with strangers.

Better a small pile from the earth than a ton from the attic.

Better in land than in sand.

Better four in happiness than two in suffering.

Every wife thinks her husband is a miser.

For a mother a son is a boy, for a father a loser, and for the children a hero.

Better forewarned, than sorry.

Keep the white guilden for a black day.

Better a little of a good thing than a lot of a bad thing.

It's better to learn little than to learn badly.

Better a little dry bread in peace, than abundant meat in war.

For an old man old wine is better than all else.

Better to lose to a wise man than to win against a fool.

Better a living dog than a dead lion.

Better to promise nothing than to renege on a promise.

Discern all things in moderation.

Take a good look at yourself before you do anything.

For a monkey its child is the most beautiful.

For every couple there are moments in life when they want to divorce.

When you are in the house you are given respect; when you leave the house you are tarnished.

When one is among friends one can say anything.

When one is among enemies one must hold one's tongue.

In times of trouble do not content yourself with reality.

Better late than never.

Better to be a dog in times of peace than a soldier in times of war.

The eyes of a clever man shine brightly.

The eyes of a fool are dull.



Belief is like an alcoholic drink: a little makes one's thoughts clearer; a lot makes one's head spin.

God gives the spider his web and the drinker his wine.

God gives warmth after clothes.

Money and credit are two rare things.

Money is most needed when you don't have any.

A good marriage is like wings; a bad marriage is like chains.

Happy is not the wife who has what she desires, but who desires what she has.

Do not give advice to those who do not want it.

Money is like a magnifying glass for small people so that they may appear as large as others.

Money is good not because we can use it to get everything for ourselves, but because we can use it to take everything from others.

Do not dig into the earth and you will stand on solid ground.

God created man because he was lonely.

Man created God because he was lonely.

Just because you believe in God does not mean you have to serve Him.

God created fools so that clever men would have someone to manipulate.

God created poor men so the rich would have someone to feel superior to.

Money is not everything, but it is powerful.

Money is circular; it belongs to one person one day, and someone else the next.

Do not turn your back on a community.

God is a father and we are children.

Money is a good servant but a poor master.

Try to deal with renown and you will have to make sure you don't get dirty.

Luck can turn a mild man into a wild man.

God watches over the imbeciles.

Luck comes to a man's house only on account of his wife.

Money places a man on his feet.

Give a bear a wife and he too will stop dancing.

Money loves calculations.

God wanted to punish man, so He gave him a wife.

T

One cannot have sympathy for the man who possesses neither money nor understanding.

Those who cannot pray cry out so that the world may hear them.

He who has crude roots, no matter how cultivated he becomes, harbors crude habits within.

Evil inclinations are easier to obey than the moral sense.

Those who write holy books are ignorant of the good in the world.

He who continually rebuilds his house will become a pauper.

All of man's afflictions are linked to his mouth.

A person's hands are always busy with something.

Three things distinguish the Jews: they have kind hearts, are shy, and will never abandon someone in times of need.

Idol worshipers appreciate a Jewish cow more than their own wives.

You and your mother should show respect for your father.

A father is one who raises a child, not one who brings a child into the world.

A man's enemies are often those of his own household.

He who spares the rod hates his own child.

Even if the mother is an outcast, her children can be respectable.

Young people chew what the old people spit out.

A rich man has many friends.

The elephant is afraid of the fly.

He who asks for forgiveness should be forgiven.

The best thing a country can have is a devoted king.
Gold is the true cosmopolitan.

Truth sprouts from the earth.
Truth is heavy, that's why there are so few people who
can bear it.

The truth is never ashamed.

The dog barks and the wind carries away.

Even the best horse needs a whip.

Even the cleverest person needs council.

The appetite comes when it's time to eat.

Destiny leads those who go willingly; the unwilling
have a hard time.

Where something was lost, that's where you should
search.

He who begrudges others eats out his own heart.

You can take the horse to water but you can't make
him drink.

Love is like a storm wind; it blows over the strongest people, blinds the keenest eyes, and dulls the sharpest minds.

You should do a favor for your worst enemy.

Mankind makes work ugly.

A poet plays as a bird sings.

A person should bear the burdens of the world on his shoulder and not be a burden to the world.

Wandering in the wilderness is worse for a man than for a woman.

God will never forgive one who gives his daughter away to an older man.

He who gives his daughter away to a crude youth is comparable to one who ties her up in front of a lion.

A learned man is radiant.

An uneducated man is obscure.

Day is more clever than the night.

Do not turn who quickly or you will end up right back where you started.

The world is two-fold: dark and impoverished on one side, bright and rich on the other.

He who is too shy will never learn.

The greatest knowledge is to know oneself.

Wine is the greatest of all medicines.

The forest itself provides the handle for the ax.

Food brings sleep.

The clever man prepares in his youth.

The clever man has eyes in his head.

The fool gropes his way in the dark.

No matter how quietly the wise man speaks his words will be heard.

The wisdom of a man lights up his face.

He who puts too much store in himself is a fool.

You'll never find a person who does not have any troubles.

He who lingers at his own table will have an easy life.

Your own life comes before that of your friend.

Even before someone dies another is standing ready to take his house.

The road to the grave is a wide one.

Death is the end of every person.

One should not close the door in front of someone who has come to borrow.

A pauper does not know just how hungry he is.

He who has enough food for two meals should not take from the communal kitchens.

He who hates to have things given to him will live.

A salesman does not begrudge you the things he sells you.

He who works the land will have his fill of bread.

The dealer who sits with his merchandise in the market square knows nothing of human goodness.

A woman's heart is a locked door to which even she does not possess a key.

Life is a pathetic card game: it tricks you into thinking you are winning but in the end you lose it all.

He who does not marry for fear it will not work out is like one who does not smell flowers in case he finds a bee.

The laughter of a young person is a comedy.

The laughter of an old person is a tragedy.

The wise man pities the fool.

The fool admires the wise man.

The idiot laughs at both of them.

He who regrets yesterday does not know how to handle today.

A truly great person does not keep himself apart from the world.

Whoever possesses greatness must share it with the world.

The maternal instinct of a woman shows itself not just when she has a child, but also when she was a child.

Nature wounds itself and nature heals itself.

Human happiness and unhappiness have more to do with one's education than with one's external circumstances.

Those who marry those they do not love are cursed to love those they do not marry.

“Dead” is an ugly word.

Where two people lie on one pillow, a third should not venture.

Man accuses the animals of being tyrants, yet to tyrannize another person is the most human thing in the world.

Nature is the most honest thing there is.

The whole world loves lovers.

He who loves to be flattered loves a liar.

Society demands the truth from all people, but where can one find it when there is so little truth to go around.

Do not serve the Devil in secret while cursing him out in the open.

The most crooked act is to straighten a ladder.

The enjoyment of life lengthens one's lifespan.

A life of enjoyment shortens one's lifespan.

Our problem is not that our intellect is limited, but that our will is boundless.

He who has too many good things has too little sympathy.

Truth is the best swindle; it is no accident that the greatest seekers of truth are persecuted.

The sun gives us light and warmth and yet we still cannot look at it directly.

The greatest unhappiness is the pursuit of happiness.

Life is short; and long may it remain so.

A giver always gives too much.

A taker always gets too little.

The full man does not believe the hungry man.

An animal reveals its true nature when it smells blood; man reveals his true nature when he smells money.

The fool always blames others.

The reasonable man blames himself.

The wise man blames no one.

That which is light floats to the surface.

A person has only one life, and looks out for it accordingly.

Those who kiss are surely friends, but there is a long distance between the lips and the heart.

You say you will do something—who believed it?

You say you've done something—prove it!

You say you're doing something now—who can see you?

If you debate with your wife there is unlikely to be consensus.

No one desires to be richer than he already is, but richer than the other guy.

The voice of a woman is so tender that it can break down walls.

The footsteps of a woman are so soft that they can cause an earthquake.

The hands of a woman are so gentle that she can hold the whole world in her fist.

Just because you serve God does not mean you have to believe in him.

Man is no camel, but he has a hump all the same.

Serving mankind means serving God.

The harshest judges of women are women themselves.

He who accepts suffering in his youth will avoid a lot of trouble in his old age.

A rich man's heart soars when he gives charity.

A poor man's heart sinks when he is obliged to accept charity.

The worst illness is more expensive than the finest dress.

There's nowhere quite like where one is not.

Where families quarrel no strangers should interfere.

The clever man can see what the future will bring.

Marriage is like a window: those who are inside look out, those who are outside look in.

Suffering is the basis of life.

The fish seeks the deepest waters.

Man seeks what is easiest.

The poor man wishes for the rich man to become poor: it seems to him the rich man would have an easier time of it.

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.

Life is a tragedy as well as a comedy.

The truth remains true no matter how ugly it is.

He who learns from others is happy.

He who does not learn from himself or from others is an unhappy fool.

True strength lies in vanquishing one's foe without hitting him.

Love has two heads: one, an angel's head. The other, a serpent's head.

The worst thing for a country is to have a king who used to be a serf.

Those who sow winds must reap storm winds.

Man should be master over his own will, and slave to his own wisdom:

He who fans the flames of a quarrel to which he does not belong has no right to complain when he gets burned.

The best walk leads to one's own door.

Three hours to make one's bed, and one hour to sleep in it.

The world likes to besmirch that which shimmers, and to hurl mud at splendor.

The worst peace is better than the best war.

The Devil is not as black as he is made out to be.

The foundation of all business is credit.

The world is beautiful for one, but ugly for another.

The sweetest thing in this world is love.

The most bitter thing in this world is death.

The greatest thing is godliness.

The basest part of humanity is malice.

The easiest thing is to speak about others.

The hardest thing is to raise children.

The most beautiful thing in the world is humanity.

The ugliest part of mankind is drunkenness.

The most precious thing in this world is life.

The cheapest is someone else's life.

One who believes that money can buy anything is capable of doing anything for money.

The best thing in life is parents.

The worst is to wander.

Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

A person spends seventy years learning reason only to die a fool.

The Jews owe nothing to any other nation: If someone gave them anything they have already been repaid threefold.

Man can be God

Man can be emperor.

Man can be a slave.

Man can be a lowly worm on the ground.

Nature is the most noble thing on earth.

The gates of tears are never closed.

If you drown another, you drown yourself.

Those who drown you will be drowned themselves.

Life is a difficult road and money is the horse.

One can never possess that which is sought.

He who does not have patience, has nothing.

A bad child drives the parents to sin.

The truth always comes to the surface, like oil on water.

A man is only as old as he feels.

The wolf draws you into the woods.

Truth is the greatest swindle.

The rich man has money and credit; the poor man has neither.

Marriage is the grave of a love affair; the woman is the gravestone.

He who holds the pen writes himself a good future.

The mediocre are never satisfied.

Man created the Devil to show how good he was in comparison.

Life is like the best meals: in order to taste good it must contain a pinch of bitterness.

The greatest monument to life is a clock.

He who thinks that he is wrong is always right.

He who loves learning stands at the gates of wisdom.

He who makes due with little is never lacking.

The greatest weakness of man is the fear of being seen as weak.

The first is always the best.

The apple never falls far from the tree.

He who holds his tongue does so for a reason.

One's forties are years of youth.

One's fifties are years of old age.

A man asks for wisdom; a woman asks for beauty.

The miller awakens from his slumber when the mill falls still.

A learned man's wife is respected as much as her husband.

A thief's wife is as hated as the thief.

The world is like a wedding feast; eat and drink as much as you can before it's all over.

The world is a boarding house: one person arrives, another leaves.

The world works the same everywhere: there is one world.

The world was given to the fools; if the clever were in charge things would be different.

Night was created only so that we could sleep.

He who jostles time will be jostled by time.

The poor man's wisdom is the subject of ridicule.

He who guards the fig tree shall eat its fruit.

For the hungry even the bitterest foods taste sweet.

The full man shall pass on even sweet foods.

One should not drink medicine. Nor should one let one's teeth be pulled, rather one should cure them.

The licentious man lacks a heart.

Three types of people are hard to find: A young man in a big city who does not sin; a poor man who returns something he has found; a rich man who does charity and does not boast about it.

An overly pious girl; a widow; and a half-baked intellectual are three people who will be the ruination of this world: each is the opposite of what they appear to be.

Troubles weigh a person down, but wine washes away the troubles.

Wine makes one drunk and sleep sobers one up again. Happy is he who can control himself.



Always hold your head facing toward the sun and the shadows will remain behind you.

Guard your money one to the extent that it is valuable to you.

If you have promised to donate you must pay up.

One should love toil and despise the nobleman.

If you borrow something you must not lose it.

If you spill water, pour some flour on it.

If you have money you cannot recognize yourself.

If you have no money others will not want to recognize you.

If one is lucky one likes to talk about it.

If one is unlucky—God forbid—others will want to talk about it.

If you undertake to do something do not complain that the work is hard.

Hope is the dream of the waking hours.

If you love people, they will love you.

Unhappy is he who cannot.

No matter where you place the patient, he will be in pain.

When you lie in a hole, make yourself small. You'll have more space and it will be easier to crawl out.

Any addition is excess.

Where there is a will, there is a way.

Time can bring many things, but not sense.

What one writes with a pen cannot be hacked off with an ax.

When one mentions death one is unsure of life.

If man were to lose hope, that is the end of life.

When you are happy don't be too happy.

Water floods the earth; along comes the sun and dries it all up.

When one has a nightmare one suffers for nothing; so it is in life where many suffer for nothing.

What does it all matter as long as you get there in the end.

When two people say the same thing, it's not the same thing.

Whatever else a man does he should be honest with himself.

When fire and water do battle, fire always loses.

How the mother is, so too are the children.

What can be celebrated today should not be put off until tomorrow.

When a great man suffers a misfortune, seek out the woman.

If you speak you'll eventually tell everything.

If every time a person lost his temper he had to pay twenty dollars in advance, he would lose his temper less often.

What you don't swallow, you don't have.

Everything old is new.

What was will be; and what was done will be done again.

Were it not for the darkness we would not appreciate the light.

Wine increases the appetite.

When a fool holds his tongue he is considered a sage.

Show the fool that he is a fool, otherwise he will believe himself to be a wise man.

Do not weep for the dead; weep for the living left behind.

May you know a life with a wife who loves you.

May you know a life with a wife that you love.

Whoever has a hundred will want two hundred.

Each generation has the leader it merits.

Each king has the ministers he merits.

When you beat one Jew all Jews feel the blow.

Before marrying a woman, the groom should investigate her brothers. Because all children turn out like their mother's brothers.

Don't ask any questions if you don't intend to buy.

The walls have ears and the streets have mouths.

One dances exactly as one plays.

He who does not believe in humanity, does not believe in himself.

He who does not believe in himself can never be successful in life.

That which a sober man keeps close to his chest, lies readily on the drunkard's lips.

That which is noble is not crude and that which is crude is not noble.

He who is active helps God.

One sleeps in the bed one makes.

Where there is love there is no shortage.

If you have a good morning you will have a good year.

Wherever the groom sits, that is the head of the table.

That which is old is not young.

Do not complain to someone who has a bitter stomach.

When a divorced man marries a divorced woman there are four people sleeping in the same bed.

The deeper you are in the forest the thicker the trees are.

Knowledge is power.

If a person knew where he would end up he would never set off on the journey.

What God ordains cannot be avoided by anyone.

If you try to satisfy everyone, no one will be satisfied.

The more things change the more they stay the same.

He who has no sympathy for others has no sympathy for himself.

If you want to win over the masses to an idea you must learn to speak to them in their language.

If you want to learn their language you must suffer with them as equals.

He who does not want to do something he is able to do, will one day be unable to do something he wants.

When a businessman gives money to charity, honor is his interest.

Don't cast a net where there are no fish.

Where there is luck there is no reason.

Where there is reason there is no luck.

When one worker flatters his boss everyone knows the reason why.

If you believe someone they will praise you.

If you don't want someone to frown upon you, you must agree with them in everything.

If you don't have his back he will be on your back.

If you want to be seen as intelligent you must trick someone.

If you want to be seen as honest you must allow someone else to trick you.

If you want to understand a person you must listen to what he says, watch how he speaks and understand why he is saying it.

The harder a writer toils over his work the easier it is for the reader.

Where it is warm take off the covers; where it is warm, pull them up.

That so many people believe in gods is proof of how much they need them.

What difference does it make to the turkey if you slaughter him for Purim or for Passover?

How a corpse looks is determined by how the person ate.

How different the world would be if the young could wait and the old could act.

Wine becomes more expensive as it ages; a person becomes cheaper.

The more powerful a country grows, the shorter its road to conflict.

When a person is having a hard time and wishes to keep his spirits up it is akin to someone being whipped and not allowed to cry.

When we make ourselves miserable we make it unbearable.

When money is scarce goods are cheap.

When money is cheap, goods are expensive.

As one comports themselves, so God helps them.

Water and time are the strongest things.

When words become deeds, the word dies.

However much the rich man gives, the poor man believes he deserves more.

However grateful the poor man is, the rich man believes he deserves more.

If one person did not lose another would not find.

Where there's smoke there's fire.

What difference does it make whether it was the cat or the mouse who ate all the butter; either way there is no butter.

Where there is Torah there is wisdom.

Be careful that you do not fall in when you dig another man's grave.

Way he who owes me money be healthy.

Even if woman were made of glass, man would still not see inside her.

Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are.

If she has only complaints, she must be a wife.

If you are passive during bad times you will survive everything.

Don't use all hundred of your hundred percent.

T

If you don't use 100% of the good things, you'll enjoy them more.

If you don't let in 100% of the bad things, you'll live longer.

Don't be a fool and no one will laugh at you.

Do not hate your brother, even in your heart.

Don't think that you're better than anyone.

You should always look for the merit in others.

Don't worry about the future; you never know what tomorrow will bring.

Don't be one of those who hide themselves away in the synagogue when there is no bread at home.

The wise man should never boast of his wisdom: be clever and hold your tongue.

Do not be an exception; be an average person. It will be easier to tolerate your little world.

Bread and salt make your cheeks red.

Be modest and others will think the world of you.



Thinking of others can only take you to hell, but never to paradise.

Daughters have the habit of eating during the day and growing at night.

Only do things that you would be willing to talk about later.

The dead no nothing.

The tongue holds power over life and death.

No matter how deep the darkness of the clouds, man can drive them away with his wisdom.



Each person is a world unto himself.

Every “why” has a “because”.

Anyone can rule over others, but few are those who can rule over themselves.

Everyone is satisfied with others.

No matter how much they may speak, everyone must stop talking some time.

All beginnings are difficult, but none are ever as bad as endings.

Everyone takes away the moral they want.

Justice is a luxury; it only exists on paper.

Every father should give his daughter everything he can, so that her suitor will want her faster.

Every worker hates the work of his profession.

He who has more sense than knowledge will one day become rich.

Everyone prefers to buy the things he is used to.

Each generation has its seekers and its sages.

Anyone who finds a way to cause Jews to suffer is destined to be a leader.

Anyone who causes Jews to suffer will never grow tired of oppressing them.

Birds of a feather flock together.

Every man has the wife he merits.

Everyone reads the letter as he understands it.

Every merchant praises his merchandise.



Anger is the weapon of the weak.



Love is a pleasure that ruins all ambitious men.

Love is a poisonous substance which can be either useful or harmful.

Do not praise anyone to his face; the bad do not deserve it, the good do not understand it, and the clever do not abide it.

Love would be the most beautiful pearl in life, if all the pearls were real.

Love is a still fire.

Love belongs predominantly to the domain of feelings.

Love is the kind of feverous illness that some people suffer through while others are left crippled.

Do not try to know God, because you are too small to understand him. Better to try to know man, perhaps you will succeed.

Practical & Clever Phrases

Compared to a heavy wagon, it's easier to go on foot.

Love irons out every wrinkle.

It's good to rub up against a full pot.

Love and youth cannot live together.

Teach your child the things he is inclined toward:
raise your children according to their talents.

Learning saps a person's energy.

מ

Don't say "ow" when it doesn't hurt.

Do can't fool anyone for long.

If you look after yourself God will look after you too.

One should live and let live.

A mother's love plays a vital role in life.

Whichever eyes you use to see the world determines the world's appearance.

Men turn with the earth, and women turn with the men.

With love is born jealousy, which follows love's every step until both perish together.

We invite friends so that they will invite us back.

We do not give honor to those who earn but to those who reap the benefits.

We have a need to see people and be seen by people.

With the truth one can go anywhere, even before God.

Avoid lauding yourself, for the winner is also a loser.

People are like leaves; when they lose their money they fall to the ground.

One can be a straight person and follow a crooked path.

Some great people are like flowers; we lose them before their time.

Better to lose to a clever man than to win against a fool.

One does not eat food as hot as one cooks it.

Don't confuse riches for reason.

We preach like philosophers and act like fools.

We receive a person according to his clothes and we follow a person according to his wisdom.

To lose with a friend is not to lose at all.

You should fight for the truth with your whole heart.

You can choke even on a small bone.

You should not be tested on what you can get used to.

With one match you can burn down an entire forest.

Man and wife are one body.

The fool and the sage are forgotten in a similar fashion.

People cannot tolerate too much of a good thing, nor too much of a bad thing.

You can't get ideas out of a fool.

Take away the body before bringing a bride to the wedding canopy.

One should ask questions when someone begs for clothes.

But one should never ask questions when someone begs for bread.

It begins with a glass and ends with a barrel.

One says to the bee: I do not want your honey, and I do not want your sting.

Be decent to a decent person.

With understanding comes heartbreak.

We believe when we know little; when we know a lot we stop believing.

No one eats with two mouths.

You know a bird by its feathers.



All that glitters is not gold.

He who has a lot of money cannot be assumed to be happy.

A peaceful life can only be had by those who are content with what they have.

Not all clever men travel in carriages.

Not all fools go on foot.

Not everyone who makes deals is a merchant.

Not all pious men are honest.

Not all honest men are pious.

Not everything that is deep contains reason.

Plucking a flower is not always a sign that someone likes flowers.

You can't be on time simply by running.

Need is stronger than iron.

Toil does not make people ugly but people can make the toil ugly.

Natural love is energizing; unnatural love is suffocating.

Not everything that lives on this earth moves.

Not everyone who has a head has a good head on their shoulders.

Not every leader leads along the straight and narrow path.

Not everyone who does foolish things is a fool.

Not everyone who speaks intelligently is intelligent.

Not everyone who is worshiped is godly.

Fools learn nothing from wise men, but wise men learn much from fools.

Not all that is beautiful is good.

Not all that is good is beautiful.

Only the pauper draws poverty in his wake.

A miracle does not happen every Purim.

Greet everyone with a hearty welcome and a friendly face.

There is no limit to the shine of heaven, though the clouds may come and hide it.

God did not make the earth for idling.

He made it for conquest.

Everyone is a saint after his death.

After death we are all free.

It is not a place that graces a person with honor, but a person that graces a place with honor.

It is not the mouse that is a thief, but the hole.

Not everything that moves is alive.



You should never assume that another does not understand.

It's better to have the worst merchandise on time than the best merchandise too late.

No one wastes money like a rich man—and yet he stays rich.

No one saves money like a poor man—and yet he stays poor.

It is a great talent to be able to spot talent in others.

It is better to have a neighbor close by, than to have a distant neighbor and live in fear.

Better a spoonful of joy than a bowl of troubles.

There is no light without shadow.

Ten good friends are better than one foe.

It is a mistake to believe you can do without others.

It is an even bigger mistake to believe others can do without us.

It is easy to become a human being, but hard to be one.

It's easier to find a friend with a big mouth than a friend with a big heart.

It's never too late if God expects it.

Sometimes worse is better, as long as it's different.

Better a bite from a friend than a kiss from a foe.

There are many people who live and toil who have it worse off than the dead. Those who were never born have it best of all.

It is difficult to make a name for oneself.

It is even more difficult to maintain one's good name.

No one is more wretched than a dog.

No one is richer than a pig.

The world takes notice when an ugly man strikes it rich.

It is better to receive guests than to receive God himself.

It is good for man to bear the yoke of hardship in his young years.

There is a large difference between learning something in one's youth and learning something in one's old age.

Eat and drink your fill, because the world we are about to leave is like a wedding banquet.

One bound bird is better than a hundred brothers.

It is easy to buy oneself an enemy.

But it is hard to buy a good friend.

A poor man on the straight and narrow is nobler than all the lords on their crooked paths.

If it weren't for the liars we would have no witnesses.

There is a time to speak and a time to hold one's tongue.

Nothing is worse than setting a decent person straight.

A nearby penny is better than a distant dollar.



Understanding brings forgiveness.

Travel slowly and you will arrive sooner.

Don't ask the doctor; ask the patient.

Why should one race of people look down upon another? Do not violate yourself or me: we're all part of the same orgy.

Fire burns everything; but along comes water and puts out the fire.

Running a business is a business in its own right.

One cannot live on joy alone.

Trouble alone won't kill you.

Joy is not something that one can possess; it is merely something that one feels.

Do not rely on miracles.

No good can come of haste.

In practice a man lives for thirty years. Before twenty he is not really a man; after sixty he is no longer a real man; and in the time that's left he spends ten years sleeping, leaving only thirty years of life as a man.

Women feel insulted by trifles. But one can regain their favor with trifles.

For the blind man a stick is also a leader.

For a blind man the shine of the sun and the flicker of a light have the same meaning.

No matter how much you scrape and scrub a sock, a sock stays a sock.

Move away from an enemy, but do not edge up to a friend.

I'll watch out for my own enemies.

May God protect me from my friends.

You can't blame an ox for more than one mistake.

The fire turns every poor man into an aristocrat.

Never hide the truth, from yourself or from others.

Do not ask an old man, except those who have experience.

The world is dark to those who look forward to another man's table.

No one seems clever to himself; all men seem clever to others.

No one gives thanks on Purim.

Do not scorn people, do not despise them, don't believe everything they say, and have sympathy for them.

Too much knowing gives you a sore head.
Study first, then marry.

Small business, small profit.

Women are kind hearted.

Women are a race unto themselves.

Women are frivolous.

Women talk a lot.

Women want to know everything.

A clever son brings joy to his father.

A foolish son brings stress to his mother.

There are those who die before their time.

There are those for whom money is more precious
than their own bodies.

Drop by drop the bucket fills.

Follow God and the tempter will follow you.

Follow the tempter and God will follow you.

Both situations are bad.

No good ever comes from war.

For the sake of peace, we must sometimes keep the
truth to ourselves.

Make a note before lending money.

Borrow first and then make a note.

You can't show a work-in-progress to a fool.

You can't let a beaten dog see your stick.

Y

Only the very large or the very small can ever be satisfied.

To be unlucky one also needs some luck.

It is not difficult for one father to have ten children.
But it is difficult for ten children to have one father.

Trouble tames the wildest man.

To be a leader of fools is harder than to herd cattle.

It's easier to be a skinflint with money than without.

Between the grandmother and the mother, a child will suffocate.

To a fool one must speak with force.

To a wiseman, a wink can be enough.

There are two people you must never try to fool: your doctor and your lawyer.

To the youth we cry: "Where are you running off to?"

To the elderly we cry: "Where are you crawling to?"

There are no last words between true friends.

It's not good to have too much money, nor is it good to have no money. A little money is not bad.

Too much work is not good. A little work is good.

Saints are greater after their death than during their own lifetimes.

Be you good or be you bad, you are all God's children.

Saints say little and do much.

Satisfaction is the child of cleverness.

Between furs and jewels, between powder and make-up, the woman vanishes.



Can a woman ever forget the infant she nursed?

You may quarrel with your friend. But you should never tell a third person what he told you.

Credit is a noble thing.

Clever people learn from others.

No one knows whose shoes are too tight.

Nothing hurts like memories of missed opportunities.

Knowing how to live is an art.

No army can do to a person what a person can do to himself.

You have the most credit when you don't need it.

No one wants to become something, but rather wants to be that something right away.

Rage drives away one's faith.

When we climb up to those who stand on the mountain top we walk with our heads bent to the ground. When we descent to those in the valley below, we walk with heads held up high.

Stress is a Jewish matter. If there is no one to put pressure on the Jew he will put pressure on himself.

Look at yourself and you can save yourself looking at others.

Nothing is ever poured as hot as it was boiled.

Clever people must be careful with their words.

No man dies having achieved even a fraction of what he had hoped.

No doctor can heal himself



Talk is silver and silence is golden.

Rumor is the weapon of envy.

Say only that which is needed.

Speak calmly and you will never scowl.

Rabbi, you are permitted and I am forbidden?



The bad is long remembered; the good is soon forgotten.

Strike the iron while it is still hot.

Don't play on your fiddle while another suffers misfortune.

One must always know how to be quiet among others who are speaking.

A person always wants what he needs, but he can't always have what he wants.

The proud never have friends. When things are going well for them, they do not want to hear from anybody; when things are going badly, no one wants to hear from them.

Samson did not lose his powers because of his own hair, but because of Delilah's hair.

If the groom plays a sad song he has his own interests in mind.

May bad neighbors do nothing of a good year.

Aspire to expand one's knowledge.

It is hard to fool the world with a lie, but it is easy with an imitated truth.

Stand up straight and walk a lot, don't eat too much and sleep in a cool place, do everything mindfully and you will live a long life.

Speedy help is the best help.

Write only that which you are willing to sign.

Fine clothes are an honor for those who wear them.

Man is strong, but troubles can defeat him.

ת

Torah without toil is no blessing.

Scholars grow more clever with age, ignoramuses grow more foolish.

Woman is our angel and our devil.

She is both the best and the worst thing in this world.

She brings happiness and also misfortune.

She brings life into the world and also leads men to their graves.

She carries peace and also conflict, passion and disappointment.

She is both paradise and damnation for man on this earth.

She is a blessing and a curse for humanity.

Within her breast lie the desires of life along with suffering and pain.

Without her there can be no life, with her life is hard and perilous.

The best is to keep her at arm's reach in her youth and marry her when she is already settled and matured, otherwise she will consume and destroy us.

A Meeting of the Yehupetz¹ Society²

IN A BUILDING situated in the center of the marketplace of a small city a meeting is underway. The room is way up on the fifth floor; after climbing those seventy-two high steps leading up there you need a quarter of an hour to catch your breath before being in any state to speak.

The room in which they meet is in fact a synagogue, with long benches and dim lamps. There is so much cigarette smoke in the room that it stings your eyes and makes you want to open a window. But the windows are so dilapidated and stubborn that they require quite some strain to budge. And besides—with the noise of the traffic and the hubbub from the marketplace, you're better off sitting amid the smoke and fumes.

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1 Yehupetz is the name used by Sholem Aleichem to refer to Kiev. Later it entered popular language as a humorous term for a provincial town.

2 A mutual aid society or Landsmanshaft was an association of immigrants from a particular town or area offering social structure and aid to those arriving in America.

The president, a young man, is by all accounts a quick-tempered sort; he doesn't like it when members talk amongst themselves during the meeting. He is one of those of the House of Shammai,³ and you'd do well to remember that the House of Shammai brooks no transgressions. He taps his gavel and everyone present rises to their feet. In a booming voice, like one declaiming the *Ha Lachma Anya*,⁴ at a Passover Seder, he announces: "In the name of the Yehupetz Society of *Landslayt* and Dignitaries, I hereby declare this meeting to be officially open." He asks the secretary to read the protocol. The secretary, Reb⁵ Manis, an elderly man with a long goatee, somewhat eagerly mumbles the words of the protocol and a debate begins about what to do with the sick.

The first to take the floor is Reb Zalman, an elderly, upstanding, charitable man, a long-time member of the Yehupetz Society. He is known as an old hand at Yehupetz Society matters. He says the following:

"Listen up everyone—you know as well as I do that we're no more than a bunch of imbeciles, a collection of nobodies prattling on about weddings and the cemetery

3 Named after one of the two schools of thought in Jewish history, the House of Shammai being the strictest of the two. Idiomatically to say that someone is of the House of Shammai indicates that they are intolerant and overzealous.

4 "*This is the bread of affliction*": a declaration recited at the beginning of the Magid portion of the Passover Seder.

5 Reb. Honorific used with a male first name.

A Meeting of the Yehupetz Society

and money for the sick . . . take me for example. This morning I remembered to pay a visit to my sick brother, Reb Shakhne. You must remember that Red Shakhne was a man of good standing back in Yehupetz, and here in America he also has a reputation. Anyway, I was driving my car over to my eldest son's place. I had a lot on my mind and intended to discuss some important society matters, but in the end my car broke down en route and I ended up stopping off at my daughter's place. By the time I got home I was so tired I dozed off and slept right through till nighttime."

The president asked Reb Zalman, "And? Did you see your brother Reb Shakhne in the end?"

"No!" came Reb Zalman's reply. Thanking the other members for the opportunity to speak, Reb Zalman returns to his seat.

The president opens the floor to debate an upcoming undertaking:

"You should know that this year the Yehupetz Society is organizing a certain enterprise. 'Why should our Yehupetz compatriots be happy about that?' You may ask, well allow me to explain . . .

"For many years the Yehupetz Society was under the thumb of the late rabbi, Reb Avremele Gordon, of blessed memory. And the rabbi—God rest his soul—used to bleed us dry, if you'll excuse the expression. Now that the rabbi is no longer with us, and we are in a position to handle our finances ourselves, we have decided to

organize a banquet for all our Yehupetzer compatriots. The banquet will take place, God willing, on the 15th of *Shevat*, and we'll celebrate that holiday in a manner fitting for the Jewish people. There's going to be a lot going on: Dogs will carry whole heads, tables and chairs will be as plentiful as trees, *mayim achronim*⁶ will flow like water and Uncle Eli, with the red nose, will get so drunk he's gonna dance in his socks! In a word—It's gonna be lively.

More people take turns speaking until eventually Reb Wolf takes the floor.

Red Wolf is a long-time member of the society. He has a very high opinion of his own worth and therefore he only attends meetings if it is in his best interest to do so. He happens to be at this particular sitting, and when it comes to his turn to speak he says the following:

“My dear fellow Yehupetzers, as you all know I am not only the most prestigious among you, but also, as you know, the most accomplished singer among all of our compatriots, and I know what an honor it is for you to have me as an esteemed member of this society. You know that I used to perform for the late rabbi, Reb Avremele Gordon—may his memory be for a blessing—and I know what a great honor it would be for all of you if I were to sing at the upcoming banquet . . .” His speech continues in this vein for some time. “As you all know . . . as you all

6 Water used to wash one's hands after a meal containing bread.

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know,” and “As you all know . . .”

As mentioned previously the president is a hard-line, House of Shammai type, and he can not tolerate it when someone rambles and digresses. He interrupts Red Wolf and passes the word to the next speaker. Reb Wolf returns to his chair, seething with resentment against all the Yehupetzer compatriots.

Next to take the floor is Reb Tuvia. Reb Tuvye is an old and loyal member, but he always has complaints about how the society is being run. This is what he says:

“Our brother, Reb Wolf was not able to express himself properly, so I will speak in his place. I know that my breath is wasted here, nevertheless, I feel it is my duty to say that it is a great injustice that you refuse to have Reb Wolf sing at your banquet. But what use are my words when Reb Kalman and Reb Fayvush and Reb Gedalia and Reb Leybush and all the hard-liners from the House of Shammai have the run of this society and do with it whatever they please.”

“Reb Tuvia, what are you saying?” the president cries out. “Who has the run of things? Who’s stopping you from taking part and having your say?”

“I have no time for such tomfoolery,” Reb Tuvia responds. He thanks them for listening and returns to his seat.

The president called on the members of the Society Committee. The first to speak is Reb Dov-Ber, the oldest member of the Yehupetz Society, a difficult man and

Gabai of the Burial Society. He broaches the question of the cemetery, because in addition to being the oldest member of the Yehupetzer Society he is also a Gabai of long standing. He has an eye for the future and it is clear to him that there are 400 members in the Yehupetzer Society all of whom are due to die at some point within the next hundred years. There will soon be nowhere to bury all of them. It will soon be imperative that the society invest in more burial plots, but because he has not yet had the opportunity to investigate conditions he is unable to give a detailed report.

By now it was twelve o'clock. The members were itching to go home. Reb Gedalia rises to his feet and announces for the benefit of the society:

"I have a message from Reb Alter who wishes to say that he could not make it to today's meeting on account of his son's impending nuptials."

The truth of the matter is that it has been over six months since Reb Alter has attended a meeting. Reb Alter, you see, considers himself to be much more intelligent than the other members, but because he can not have his way and overturn the decisions of the majority he decided not to come to meetings at all. He wants to announce the news of his son's wedding, yet he does not extend an invitation to the members of the society. He is afraid they might send a committee to attend the wedding, and the last thing he needs is a bunch of Yehupetzer asses, clowns and nobodies to turn up at his son's wedding.

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The president, in keeping with his reputation, sends along a dry, impersonal note wishing the happy couple *mazel tov*.

The finance secretary, Reb Akiva, a great scholar and an accomplished cantor, reads aloud his financial report of all monies, incoming and outgoing, whereupon the president brings the meeting of the Yehupetz Society to a somemn, dignified close.

Composed by Abraham Schneider

Abraham Schneider (1876–1960) was born in Berdichev, Russian Empire (modern-day Ukraine) and arrived in America in 1922 with his family—wife, two daughters and a son—via Antwerp, Belgium.

A furrier by trade, Schneider was a passionate collector of words and phrases. He assembled the present volume, containing over a thousand entires, in his spare time.

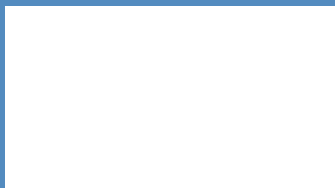
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